

CIA & JFK: An Interview with Jefferson Morley

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As the editor of JFKFacts.org, a website devoted to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Jefferson Morley is asked, "So who killed JFK? What's your theory?"

Morley, a former reporter for the Washington Post and author of *Our Man in Mexico: Winston Scott and the Hidden History of the CIA*, invariably disappoints. "I don't know. It's too early to tell."

Fifty-plus years after JFK's death, this answer is laughable but serious. The JFK story remains unsettled well into the 21st century, no matter what the various conspiracy and anti-conspiracy theorists may proclaim. Indeed, the complex reality of how a president of the United States came to be gunned down on a sunny day, and no one lost his liberty — or his job — continues to live and grow in popular memory.

This is a book that reveals deceit and deception on the part of the CIA relating to the Kennedy assassination and why the CIA should reveal to the American people what it is still keeping secret.

Employing his investigative reporting skills through interviews and examination of long-secret records, Morley reveals that the CIA was closely monitoring the movements of accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald in the months preceding the assassination of President Kennedy.

Questions naturally arise: Did the CIA suspect that Oswald was up to no good? Or was its surveillance part of a CIA scheme to frame Oswald for the assassination of President Kennedy? Why did the CIA keep its surveillance secret from the Warren Commission?

Morley also reveals a close relationship between the CIA and an American anti-Castro group that began advertising Oswald's connections to communism and the Soviet Union immediately after the assassination?

That raises questions: Why didn't the CIA reveal that relationship to official agencies investigating the assassination of President Kennedy? Why did a federal judge and the chief counsel of the House Select Committee on Assassinations accuse the CIA of deceit and deception?

The U.S. government retains almost 3,600 assassination-related records, consisting of tens of thousands of pages that have never been seen by the public. More than 1,100 of these records are held by the CIA.

What is in those secret files? What do they reveal about JFK's death? Why has the CIA been so reluctant to release them? And when will they finally be revealed to the public? Will they answer the disturbing questions that the revelations in this book raise?

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hi I'm Jacob Hornberger president of the future of Freedom Foundation and i'm joined by jefferson Morley a former reporter for The Washington Post who runs a fantastic website called JFK facts org and we're talking today about the great ebook that future of Freedom Foundation is about to publish that was written by Jeff

Morley when I first encountered Jeff it was a result of an episode that he describes in this book it was about a CIA agent named George Joe Anita's and I had read Jeff's account of a lawsuit that he had filed against the CIA arising out of Joe and Eva's activities prior to the assassination and the CIA's deception and cover-up with respect to Joe and eNOS after the assassination and I was so intrigued and so impressed by the perseverance and determination of this guy then I started writing a series of articles for FFF on the George Johnny this matter and that matter is explained in detail in this book now this book is exciting it's not your standard conspiracy book we've published some of those we're very proud of the books that we publish they've become all great sellers on Amazon our all-time bestseller is the Kennedy autopsy and that I wrote we have one by Douglas Horne called JFK's war with the national security establishment why Kennedy was assassinated and of course Horne served on the ARR be back in the 90s we've got another one called the CIA terrorism and the Cold War the evil of the national security state and finally regime change the JFK assassination but this book is in a sort of a different genre it raises really

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of a different genre it raises really intriguing questions from a reporter standpoint because that's what Jeff is a reporter of the CIA conduct with respect to the JFK assassination a conduct that has been deceptive that has been deceitful and and so Jeff reports on these and a lot of this is investigative reporting that he's done in the book and so when he approached us and said would y'all be interested in publishing this book I read it and I said absolutely this this book raises very disturbing questions about the CIA's conduct with respect to the JFK assassination so Jeff it's it's great to have you here and thank you for doing this great book we're we're excited about it and why don't you tell our viewers what you think about this book why you think it's important why you want it did published and why you're excited about it well first of all thank you for publishing it I came to you when I saw the books that you had published on the assassination and I realized that I had all this material that I've been gathering over the years and I never put it all in one book it doesn't add up to a nice tidy thesis like a commercial bookseller once but like you say this is important stuff this is a very close look at maybe a dozen CIA officers who played some role in the events leading to the assassination of the president and they might have known something they might have done something but anyway I was always very unhappy or dissatisfied with JFK books because I felt like there were leads sitting around and nobody was going and finding the people and I knew that some of these people were still alive or their kids were alive were people who they worked with were alive and so I just started going after them and trying to run down as many documents and people and put them together not with an idea of knitting it all together into some great thesis but just to delve deeply into all of them and that's what

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deeply into all of them and that's what this book is it looks at CIA covert operations officers working in Miami New Orleans who know about Oswald before the assassination or are involved in assassination operations themselves and so this book really takes you inside the CIA in that period and and then subsequently you know what was hidden back then what's been slowly revealed and how it came to light and so the book is a little bit of a detective story um that unfolds in time and you see oh time how the things that were concealed a little bit at the first you scrape it away lo and behold there's another story behind it so this is the this book has the most complete account I've ever published of the story of George Joanne Edie's psychological warfare officer working in Miami in 1963 and running the young Cuban the anti-castro students who come in contact with Oswald and Joanne Edie's protege is in this student group are the ones who really publicized Oswald before the assassination more than anybody else and that fact alone is worth just pausing on because that was totally unknown that the people who came out within hours of the president's death to say uh the accused assassin is pro-castro that was a CIA front group and I say that without any fear of contradiction the CIA has never said that any if my reporting on any of this is wrong so this is very solid story and readers can decide for themselves you know how does it fit in with their understanding but I guarantee you this whenever you think about the assassination you will come out of reading this book knowing more about what really happened yeah it really is a detective story I mean when when Joanne Davis his role is kept

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when Joanne Davis his role is kept secret by the CIA not just from the Warren Commission but also from the House Select Committee in the 1970s and then from the ARRB in the 90s and then what I feel is fascinating what I got I'm sorry go ahead this this story was buried very deeply and we still don't have it all you know my lawsuit tried to get at this and the CIA reacted very defensively never never sought to explain what was going on only to shut me down that was the only thing and you know the fact is the CIA does talk to reporters and if you go to them and you say you know could you explain to me what's going on and explain it off the record I won't quote you they they will do that sometimes but in this case no and and so you know they would say well you know morally as a conspiracy theorist I would said well you know tell me what you think and I'll print that and they wouldn't do that so I think that's very telling that this is something they really really don't want to talk about and that that has to be cause for concern for anybody who's interested in the Kennedy assassination if if the if the official story is so obvious and true as we've been told for so many times then why not talk about it why not talk about it's obvious 'no sand its truthfulness yeah that in this case they can't do that in this case there are there are aspects of the story you know what did George Johnny D's know did he'd report these contacts with with between the his agents in New Orleans and Miami to the CIA before the assassination did he report it after the assassination he certainly should have but and that's what my lawsuit aimed was what was he you know what did he report we don't know any of that so what I tell in the book is what was going on who was this guy and I talked to people who know him the Cubans who he worked with they were young men who had come out of the

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were young men who had come out of the University of Havana in the early 60s fired up about opposing communist and all that and made an alliance with the CIA um well I went and found them and they talked about the man they didn't know his real name but they described him accurately he was from New York he was spoke with a New York accent was very well dressed that a nice big pinkie ring and all of that was true that was the man named George Giannini's and all the documentation that I've got from the CIA and also which I found at the University of Miami corroborated the story a dozen different ways so this guy was in the thick of the story and yet he was not told to the warned his existence was not disclosed to the Warren Commission he himself stonewalled the HSC and after he was dead the CIA tried to stonewall the assassination records Review Board in the 90s and I tell all that story in the book of how they didn't get away with it and what we do know about what he was doing you know was Joe any these involved in a conspiracy I I don't have any Evan of that but he was deeply involved in the events that led to the assassination and his actions have never been explained so this book really lays that out and then puts his story in the context of other CIA officers who were his colleagues and whose names are better known like Bill Harvey David Phillips and so you can see how Joanna Dee's fits into the bigger picture of these characters were also Wilma Harvey well-known for running the CIA's assassination operations ER rifle and also known for his intense hostility to the Kennedy brothers and their Cuba policy David Phillips suspected by some on the HSC a of perjury ran psychological warfare he was join Edie's boss basically and so the join 80 story is put in the context of these other more well-known stories so you get this bigger picture of CIA operations related

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bigger picture of CIA operations related to Oswald and the events that led to the assassination yeah and how many times do you have a federal judge accusing the CIA of deception and deceit and that's exactly what judge John Chinam who had headed the ARRB accused of CIA of doing as a result of their deception relating to Joe and eNOS and the other thing that you point out in this book is is when when the the CIA was supposedly cooperating with the House Select Committee in the 1970s when the the two young investigators Hardy Lopez started getting a little bit too close for comfort with the CIA in discovering documents and records they call Joe and Edith out of retirement to serve as a liaison but as we now know as you point out in the book he was really an obstructive justice there he his job was to block access to CIA records relating to the assassination absolutely and and and Bob Bob Blakey the the head of the you know the Council for the

for the House Select Committee operation investigation told me this was obstruction of Congress this was an a felony and judge tunheim the head of the a ARB in the night 90s you know um they didn't get the story that the AAR be shut down and I only got a handful of records related to Joe Andes and two nine told me you know if we'd had the time if we had known about this we would have gone back and gotten a lot more we would have demanded to know really much more about this guy you know we didn't really know who he was and so they made these records public but they had no ability to follow up and so that's the situation that we find ourselves in now and now we're looking at the October 2017 deadline for the declassification of all the JFK records that were supposed to be made public under the JFK Records Act so you know we've got a little time horizon

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know we've got a little time horizon where we may have some more disclosure around these CIA officers in the next you know year and a half well I wonder when you said the CIA was really the the first promoter of a conspiracy theory in the Kennedy assassination because when the dr east which was being secretly funded with through joe ninis by the CIA immediately after the assassination with with Joanie this was full knowledge they come out with this press release advertising Oswald's bona fides with the Communist world the Soviet Union Cuba in other words implying and that this was the Soviet Cuban assassination really that was within within 48 hours of Kennedy's death the the the Cuban student Directorate newspaper had the headline the presumed assassins over pictures of Oswald and Castro and it was it was the first JFK conspiracy scenario ever to come into public print and that publication was paid for totally by the CIA and so and even that fact even that fact was totally unknown so um this was a story that you can tell this was supposed to be a CIA operation that was supposed to be secret from conception to Eternity and now it's not and and you can see them in the course of the book you can see that they're caught you they thought this whole thing was gonna go and there would be no attribution to the CIA and now it's there and they can't they can't deny it at all and and like I said before CIA has never said that one word that I've written about this whole matter is inaccurate and you know if I had made a mistake or you know said too much they would have come down down on me like a ton of bricks so I take their silence as a kind of compliment that this is accurate reporting yeah and then another tidbit in your in your book that I just found so amusing was your with interaction

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so amusing was your with interaction with a CIA official named Jane Roman where you hunted her down and you found her and and arranged an interview with her and she said how did you find me I had to give away some trade secrets there yeah I I found the records of her daughters condo actually and found her phone number that way so you know that's one of the tricks of the trade but yeah and and Jane Roman a very well-placed she was the gaze on officer between the counterintelligence staff of the CIA and all government agencies mostly the FBI but if when this when the Counter Intelligence staff communicated with another government agency Jane Roman handle it was a it was a position of considerable trust and I went to her in the 90s when some declassified documents came out and her name was on them and so I looked up the names of all the people who were on there because I thought whoever handled pre assassination intelligence about Oswald had interesting information I mean to me that was just a great you know like a great lead a great news story in the making and so I found her and then we went and talked to her and as I tell the story in the book you know very careful lady very loyal to the CIA a very very good memory of these events you know recalled with precision things that had happened 30 years before and she said some very interesting things basically what boiled down to when read the book you'll see you know they were very interested in Oswald forty days before the assassination and this simple fact and this is not there's no disputing it this simple fact was totally unknown to the to the warrant much I mean imagine the public reaction

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much I mean imagine the public reaction if it had been known in 1963 or 64 that a half dozen CIA officials reviewed Oswald's record and thought about it and wrote cables about it and made decisions about him and that all happened six weeks before Kennedy was killed we didn't find out that fact out for four thirty plus years and then then you add on top of it the story of a guy like Joanna DS which we didn't learn for forty years 50 years and you realize there's something here that's been buried buried deeply so my book kind of is opens up that door and leads you into this room and just says take a look around look at what these people were doing and decide for yourself well and when when after you had conducted this interview as an investigative reporter with Jane Roman she telephones you the next day and a sheer panic that apparently she talked too much yeah and and and all we did all we did was just say you know here's the record you could you know tell us about this what was happening and you know that's just like that's just good reporting you don't go in and accuse something people of something or you know have a theory and say it is my theory right this is what this is where a lot of people go wrong when writing about the JFK story no you present the facts of knowledgeable people you say well you know what what was happening and that kind of restrained approach with Jane Roman really pays off she says some things about the handling of intelligence about Oswald before the assassination that are absolutely fascinating and telling very telling about the whole story so that was really and you know that was that was kind of my first big story that I did in JFK when I was in the 90s and I realized man this is a good story you know this is like not like somebody's making this up or pushing conspiracies or something this story of what's going on with the see I a and the JFK story is really rich and like there's way more here than they

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like there's way more here than they ever told anybody yeah now once you start reading this book you can't put it down like as you said in the beginning this is like a detective novel but real true to life okay let's talk about let's wrap it up by talking about the the records release that is scheduled for October or November of 2017 so let me yeah yeah let me just explain that because it's a little complicated people say well well you know I thought all the records came out or I thought the records were staying secret so he'll 2075 well here's the story when when Oliver Stone made his movie in 1992 created a huge fuss and he got attacked left and right playing with history and all of that and he countered with well if the government doesn't have anything to hide why are they hiding so much and he pointed out the unpleasant fact that millions of pages of Records related to the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee were still secret in 1992 so 30 you know 29 years after the assassination literally millions of pages and so you know stones movie put the Washington establishment in a bad light it basically said here was this plot against the President and you know it was it was falsified and covered up and the Washington establishment people were very embarrassed and so Congress responded by actually doing something that was pretty sensible they said okay we're not gonna try and solve the assassination but we are gonna make all these records public and that way we will prove that the government doesn't have anything to hide and so that was the JFK Records Act which was passed in October 1992 it was the last piece of legislation signed by the first president Bush it passed Congress unanimous imagine that in this day and age a piece of legislation significant piece of legislation about a serious event in American history passed unanimously by a Democratic Congress signed by a Republican president and it mandated that these records be released and so it created a process and lots of

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and so it created a process and lots of records were released in the 1990s but the law had a provision which said if the agencies want you withhold information for reasons of national security from their JFK documents they can do that but they have to give a reason and after 25 years all of those all of that material it can be delayed for up to 25 years but after 25 years it has to be made public so that was 1992 25 years later is October 2017 and so whatever the CIA didn't release in the 1990s or the years since then has to become public in October 2017 now and it's a lot of material I say Jake we know the the National Archives says that it's about 3600 documents from all government agencies and these documents a document can have hundreds of pages in it so the 3600 documents probably comprises a hundred thousand pages of material or you know a significant you know a shelf full of material and so that is what's supposed to become public a lot

of that is relevant the CIA says that this material is enbe are not believed relevant that's the bureaucratic code for this material but we know something about these records and we know that at least some of them are highly relevant to the assassination story because they concern these officers who are implicated in the story like Bill Harvey the head of the assassination program like David Phillips in charge of psychological warfare operations david morales worked in the JM wave howard hunt the the Watergate burglar who implicated himself in the crime of Dallas at one point records regarding those officers are included in this material that's supposed to come out in October 2017 so

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supposed to come out in October 2017 so some of this material is going to be very relevant to the assassination and that's what's that's what we're looking for now is maybe they can fill out the picture that this book explains and maybe we'll learn more of the story at that time yeah really it's strange to debate that they they put the AR AR out of business but the document production still has to take place I mean in an ideal world you'd want that Commission in existence to enforce the release of those documents and people say yeah this is this is the real problem now is that um according to the law the way the law was written was went in the ARB went out of existence the National Archives was supposed to take over the responsibility for seeing the enforcement of the law the problem with that is that the National Archives is a federal agency that gets a budget of about 400 million dollars a year now when they have a conflict with the CIA a government agency that has a budget of about 15 billion dollars a year there's no way they can win right the CIA is gonna win any power struggle with the National Archives the assassination records Review Board on the other hand was an independent agency had the ear of the President and the CIA knew they could play around with them the CIA you know it would be embarrassing for them so we don't really have a good enforcement mechanism going in to October 2017 which is why it's really important that we have public discussion because the only thing that will force the CIA to be into any kind of transparency is a fear of public reaction that's the only thing that will get them to act possibly not saying it will but it might so part of the reason that I wanted to put this book out now was to inform people about what the real situation is heading into October 2017 what we know and what we don't know and I think if people can see that then

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I think if people can see that then they'll see understand the imperative of full disclosure in October 2017 yeah you know a lot of people don't realize how many how much information really smoking gun type information came out as a result of the ARB which was brought into existence because of Oliver Stone's movie I detail this and the Kennedy autopsy my ebook which was really a recap Faline of doug horns 5 volume book called inside the assassination records review board but for example there was a woman named Sondra Spencer who worked in the photography Center of the Navy here in Washington she worked closely with the White House I mean you couldn't find a more credible witness than Sondra Spencer and when the ar-ar-ar B took her testimony under oath she was asked to look at the official photographic records in of the autopsy she looked at him and testified under oath those are not the photographs I developed the ones I develop look totally different and this is the type of thing that came out now you would think that if they if they want to hide stuff they put though the ones they want to hide to the very end the 20 over the 25 year lapse and those are the ones that assassination researchers are now really interested in looking at now there's one there's one caveat here that they still haven't out did somebody slip something into the law there in 1992 that said that they can ask the president for another extension right Jeff yeah yeah yes and this is gonna be this is gonna be the first big you know open government decision that that the president then the next president is gonna face you know 10 months into his or her presidency the president is going to have to decide whether to allow the CIA to delay the release of this material longer now the CIA hasn't said what their position is yet whether they

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what their position is yet whether they will request delay but knowing the CIA you have to assume that they will request the delay of material if only because some of it may be very embarrassing to them and so this is why it's important that people know about it so that um and talk about it during this presidential election so that you know we have some accountability here and you know will the next president allow the CIA to keep on hiding this stuff or will an ex-president say look the law was very clear this is history it's time to come clean and make it all public without exception that's really the only satisfactory resolution to this if the CIA plays games and tries to hide this they're just going to draw more suspicion upon themselves it incriminating so it's very important that we get full disclosure in October 2017 we can begin to say okay now we've got a reasonably complete record of the assassination what do we know and you know we till that time I think you know we really can't say we can't draw hard and fast conclusions about the assassination not with you know 20 50 thousand pages of material is still out there who knows what's it you know and you have to assume this is the last stuff they're releasing you have to assume that this is the stuff that that they that they do not want the public see well the notion that national security however you define that term can be threatened or jeopardized by the release of 50 year old documents is absolutely ridiculous I mean not only ridiculous but to use a word that is often thrown at those of us who are interested in assassination it's an incredibly paranoid view that this piece of paper from 50 years ago is gonna damage an America the safety of an American today I mean you really have to concoct a weird theory to think that that's true a weird paranoid theory and

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that's true a weird paranoid theory and that's the basis of CIA disclosure policies paranoid theories yeah well but I think it could go much further here that if they really do ask for an extension I think the only realistic reason that anyone can really draw is it because there really is increment incriminating material that they don't want the American people to see and as you point out it's only public opinion it's going to stop this just like what happened in 92 the only reason we got the ARB and the release of all those records was a public opinion there was so much outrage over this continued secrecy and that's a real testament to what Oliver Stone accomplished that they've got the release of those documents and that's what we need today and that's what you're doing on your website at JFK Fox org there's other groups now that are forming to say we release the documents in October 2017 and in a large part that's what this book is about is about let's get rid of all the secrecy in the JFK assassination and the name of the book is CIA and JFK the secret assassination files we're excited that about the book Jeff and I want to thank you very much for for giving us the opportunity to publish it my pleasure I'm looking forward to I really want to hear from readers you know the the Internet is a great way of sharing information and without spending any secrets I've learned more recently about the George Joanna Diez story and there is definitely more to come so I look forward to hearing from people every little bit helps in putting together this mosaic letting your voice be heard in October 2017 you know and and we can change the government's reaction to this the public does on the on the question of the JFK assassination public opinion it has the upper hand the public opinion is so strong and the government knows that its credibility is so weak that they have to comply with it if they feel it they will comply because because

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feel it they will comply because because they know that the alternative is very incriminating so that's what we need to summon in the next year is people yet being knowledgeable and speaking out and I think my book is a contribution towards really educating people so that we can have strong public opinion at that time and create the full disclosure that is so long overdue well said Jeff the name of the book CIA and JFK the secret assassination files thanks Jacob

END